



Executive Order 12873 - Federal Acquisition, Recycling, and Waste Prevention



WHEREAS, the Nation's interest is served when the Federal Government can make more efficient use of natural resources by maximizing recycling and preventing waste whenever possible;

WHEREAS, this administration is determined to strengthen the role of the Federal Government as an enlightened, environmentally conscious and concerned consumer;

WHEREAS, the Federal Government should-through cost-effective waste prevention and recycling activities-work to conserve disposal capacity, and serve as a model in this regard for private and other public institutions; and

WHEREAS, the use of recycled and environmentally preferable products and services by the Federal Government can spur private sector development of new technologies and use of such products, thereby creating business and employment opportunities and enhancing regional and local economies and the national economy;

NOW, THEREFORE I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including the Solid Waste Disposal Act, Public Law 89-272, 79 Stat. 997, as amended by the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act ("RCRA"), Public Law 94-580, 90 Stat. 2795 as amended (42 U.S.C. 6901-6907), and section 301 of title 3, United States Code, hereby order as follows:

Part 1: Preamble

Section 101. Consistent with the demands of efficiency and cost effectiveness, the head of each Executive agency shall incorporate waste prevention and recycling in the Agency's daily operations and work to increase and expand markets for recovered materials through greater Federal Government preference and demand for such products.

Sec. 102. Consistent with policies established by Office of Federal Procurement Policy)"OFPP") Policy Letter 92-4, agencies shall comply with executive branch policies for the acquisition and use of environmentally preferable products and services and implement cost-effective procurement preference programs favoring the purchase of these products and services.

Sec. 103. This order creates a Federal Environmental Executive and establishes high-level Environmental Executive positions within each agency to be responsible for expediting the implementation of this order and statutes that pertain to this order.

Part 2: Definitions

For purposes of this order:

Sec 201. "Environmentally preferable" means products or services that have a lesser or reduced effect on human health and the environment when compared with competing products or services that serve the same purpose. This comparison may consider raw materials acquisition, production, manufacturing, packaging, distribution, reuse, operation, maintenance, or disposal of the product or service.

Sec. 202. "Executive agency" or "agency" means an Executive agency as defined in 5 U.S.C 105. For the purpose of this order, military departments, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 102, are covered under the auspices of the Department of Defense.

Sec. 203. "Postconsumer material" means a material or finished product that has served its intended use and has been discarded for disposal or recovery, having completed its life as a consumer item. "Postconsumer material" is a part of the broader category of "recovered material".

Sec. 204. "Acquisition" means the acquiring by contract with appropriated funds for supplies or services (including construction) by and for the use of the Federal Government through purchase or lease, whether the supplies or services are already in existence or must be created, developed, demonstrated and evaluated. Acquisition begins at the point when agency needs are established and includes the description of requirements to satisfy agency needs, solicitation and selection of sources, award of contracts, contract financing, contract performance, contract administration and those technical and management functions directly related to the process of fulfilling agency needs by contract.

Sec. 205. "Recovered materials" means waste materials and by-products which have been recovered or diverted from solid waste, but such term does not include those materials and by-products generated from, and commonly reused within, an original manufacturing process (42 U.S.C. 6903 (19)).

Sec 206. "Recyclability" means the ability of a product or material to be recovered from, or otherwise diverted from, the solid waste stream for the purpose of recycling.

Sec. 207. "Recycling" means the series of activities, including collection, separation, and processing, by which products or other materials are recovered from the solid waste stream for use in the form of raw materials in the manufacture of new products other than fuel for producing heat or power by combustion.

Sec. 208. "Waste prevention," also known as "source reduction," means any change in the design, manufacturing, purchase or use of materials or products (including packaging) to reduce their amount or toxicity before they become municipal solid waste. Waste prevention also refers to the reuse of products or materials.

Sec. 209. "Waste reduction" means preventing or decreasing the amount of waste being generated through waste prevention, recycling, or purchasing recycled and environmentally preferable products.

Sec 210. "Life Cycle Cost" means the amortized annual cost of a product, including capital costs, installation costs, operating costs, maintenance costs and disposal costs discounted over the lifetime of the product.

Sec. 211. "Life Cycle Analysis" means the comprehensive examination of a product's environmental and economic effects throughout its lifetime including new material extraction, transportation, manufacturing, use, and disposal.

Part 3: The Role of the Federal Environmental Executive and Agency Environmental

Executives.**Sec. 301. Federal Environmental Executive.**

- a. A Federal Environmental Executive shall be designated by the President and shall be located within the environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"). The Federal Environmental Executive shall take all actions necessary to ensure that the agencies comply with the requirements of this order and shall generate an annual report to the Office of Management and Budget ("OMB"), at the time of agency budget submissions, on the actions taken by the agencies to comply with the requirements of this order. In carrying out his or her functions, the Federal Environmental Executive shall consult with the Director of the White House Office on Environmental Policy.
- b. Staffing. A minimum of four (4) full time staff persons are to be provided by the agencies listed below to assist the Federal Environmental Executive, one of whom shall have experience in specification review and program requirements, one of whom shall have experience in procurement practices, and one of whom shall have experience in solid waste prevention and recycling. These four staff persons shall be appointed and replaced as follows:
 - i. a representative from the Department of Defense shall be detailed for not less than one year and no more than two years;
 - ii. a representative from the General Service Administration ("GSA") shall be detailed for not less than one year and no more than two years;
 - iii. a representative from EPA shall be detailed for not less than one year and no more than two years; and
 - iv. a representative from one other agency determined by the Federal Environmental Executive shall be detailed on a rotational basis for not more than one year.
- c. Administration. Agencies are requested to make their services, personnel and facilities available to the Federal Environmental Executive to the maximum extent practicable for the performance of functions under this order.
- d. Committees and Work groups. The Federal Environmental Executive shall establish committees and work groups to identify, assess, and recommend actions to be taken to fulfill the goals, responsibilities, and initiatives of the Federal Environmental Executive. As these committees and work groups are created, agencies are requested to designate appropriate personnel in the areas of procurement and acquisition, standards and specifications, electronic commerce, facilities management, waste prevention, and recycling, and others as needed to staff and work on the initiatives of the Executive.
- e. Duties. The Federal Environmental Executive, in consultation with the Agency Environmental Executives, shall:
 - i. identify and recommended initiatives for government-wide implementation that will promote the purposes of this order, including:
 - A. the development of a federal plan for agency implementation of this order and appropriate incentives to encourage the acquisition of recycled and environmentally preferable products by the Federal Government;
 - B. the development of a federal implementation plan and guidance for instituting economically efficient federal waste prevention, energy and water efficiency programs, and recycling programs within each agency; and
 - C. the development of a plan for making maximum use of available funding assistance programs;
 - ii. collect and disseminate information electronically concerning methods to reduce waste, materials that can be recycled, costs and savings associated with waste prevention and recycling, and current market sources of products that are environmentally preferable or

- produced with recovered materials;
- iii. provide guidance and assistance to the agencies in setting up and reporting on agency programs and monitoring their effectiveness; and
- iv. coordinate appropriate government-wide education and training programs for agencies.

Sec 302. Agency Environmental Executives. Within 90 days after the effective date of this order, the head of each Executive department and major procuring agency shall designate an Agency Environmental Executive from among his or her staff, who serves at a level no lower than at the Deputy Assistant Secretary level or equivalent. The Agency Environmental Executive will be responsible for:

- a. coordinating all environmental programs in the areas of procurement and acquisition, standards and specification review, facilities management, waste prevention and recycling, and logistics;
- b. participating in the interagency development of a Federal plan to:
 - 1. Create an awareness and outreach program for the private sector to facilitate markets for environmentally preferable and recycled products and services, promote new technologies, improve awareness about federal efforts in this area, and expedite agency efforts to procure new products identified under this order;
 - 2. establish incentives, provide guidance and coordinate appropriate educational programs for agency employees; and
 - 3. coordinate the development of standard agency reports required by this order;
- 4. reviewing agency programs and acquisitions to ensure compliance with this order.

Part 4: Acquisition Planning and Affirmative Procurement Programs

Sec. 401. Acquisition Planning. In developing plans, drawings, work statements, specifications, or other product descriptions, agencies shall consider the following factors:

- 1. elimination of virgin material requirements;
- 2. use of recovered materials;
- 3. reuse of product;
- 4. life cycle cost;
- 5. recyclability;
- 6. use of environmentally preferable products;
- 7. waste prevention (including toxicity reduction or elimination); and
- 8. ultimate disposal, as appropriate.

These factors should be considered in acquisition planning for all procurements and in the evaluation and award of contracts, as appropriate. Program and acquisition managers should take an active role in these activities.

Sec. 402. Affirmative Procurement Programs. The head of each Executive agency shall develop and implement affirmative procurement programs in accordance with RCRA section 6002 (42 U.S.C. 6962) and this order. Agencies shall ensure that responsibilities for preparation, implementation and monitoring of affirmative procurement programs are shared between the program personnel and procurement personnel. For the purposes of all purchases made pursuant to this order, EPA, in consultation with such other Federal agencies as appropriate, shall endeavor to maximize environmental benefits, consistent with price, performance and availability considerations, and shall adjust bid solicitation guidelines as necessary in order to

accomplish this goal.

- a. Agencies shall establish affirmative procurement programs for all designated EPA guideline items purchased by their agency. For newly designated items, agencies shall revise their internal programs within one year from the date EPA designated the new items.
- b. For the currently designated EPA guideline items, which are:
 - i. concrete and cement containing fly ash;
 - ii. recycled paper products;
 - iii. re-refined lubricating oil;
 - iv. retread tires; and
 - v. insulation containing recovered materials.And for all future guideline items, agencies shall ensure that their affirmative procurement programs require that 100 percent of their purchases of products meet or exceed the EPA guideline standards unless written justification is provided that a product is not available competitively within a reasonable time frame, does not meet appropriate performance standards, or is only available at an unreasonable price.
- c. The Agency Environmental Executives will track agencies' purchases of designated EPA guideline items and report agencies' purchases of such guideline items to the Federal Environmental Executive. Agency Environmental Executives will be required to justify to the Federal Environmental Executive as to why the item(s) have not been purchased or submit a plan for how the agencies intend to increase their purchase of the designated item(s).
- d. Agency affirmative procurement programs, to the maximum extent practicable, shall encourage that:
 1. documents be transferred electronically,
 2. all government documents printed internally be printed double-sided, and
 3. contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements issued after the effective date of this order include provisions that require documents to be printed double-sided on recycled paper meeting or exceeding the standards established in this order or in future EPA guidelines.

Sec. 403. Procurement of Existing Guideline Items. Within 90 days after the effective date of this order, the head of each Executive agency that has not implemented an affirmative procurement program shall ensure that the affirmative procurement program has been established and is being implemented to the maximum extent practicable.

Sec. 404. Electronic Acquisition System. To reduce waste by eliminating unnecessary paper transactions in the acquisition process and to foster accurate data collection and reporting of agencies' purchases of recycled content and environmentally preferred products, the executive branch will implement an electronic commerce system consistent with the recommendations adopted as a result of the National Performance Review.

Part 5: Standards, Specifications, and Designation of Items

Sec. 501. Specifications, Product Descriptions and Standards. Where applicable, Executive agencies shall review and revise federal and military specifications, products descriptions and standards to enhance Federal procurement of products made from recovered materials or that are environmentally preferable. When converting to a Commercial Item Description (CID), agencies shall ensure that environmental factors have been considered and that the CID meets or exceeds the environmentally preferable

criteria of the government specification or product description. Agencies shall report annually on their compliance with this section to the Federal Environmental Executive for incorporation into the annual report to OMB referred to in section 301 of this order.

- a. If an inconsistency with RCRA Section 6002 or this order is identified in a specification, standard, or product description, the Federal Environmental Executive shall request that the Environmental Executive of the pertinent agency advise the Federal Environmental Executive as to why the specification cannot be revised or submit a plan for revising it within 60 days.
- b. If an agency is able to revise an inconsistent specification but cannot do so within 60 days, it is the responsibility of that agency's Environmental Executive to monitor and implement the plan for revising it.

Sec. 502. Designation of Items that Contain Recovered Materials. In order to expedite the process of designating items that are or can be made with recovered materials, EPA shall institute a new process for designating these items in accordance with RCRA section 6002(a) as follows. (a) EPA shall issue a Comprehensive Procurement Guideline containing designated items that are or can be made with recovered materials.

1. The proposed guideline shall be published for public comment in the Federal Register within 180 days after the effective date of this order and shall be updated annually after publication for comment to include additional items.
 2. Once items containing recovered materials have been designated by EPA through the new process established pursuant to this section and in compliance with RCRA section 6002, agencies shall modify their affirmative procurement programs to require that, to the maximum extent practicable, their purchases of products meet or exceed the EPA guideline standards unless written justification is provided that a product is not available competitively, not available within a reasonable time frame, does not meet appropriate performance standards, or is only available at an unreasonable price.
- c. Concurrent with the issuance of the Comprehensive Procurement Guideline required by section 502(a) of this order, EPA shall publish for public comment in the Federal Register Recovered Material Advisory Notice(s) that present the range of recovered material content levels within which the designated recycled items are currently available. These levels shall be updated periodically after publication for comment to reflect changes in market conditions.

Sec. 502. Guidance for Environmentally Preferable Products. In accordance with this order, EPA shall issue guidance that recommends principles that Executive agencies should use in making determinations for the preference and purchase of environmentally preferable products.

- a. Proposed guidance shall be published for public comment in the Federal Register within 180 days after the effective date of this order, and may be updated after public comment, as necessary, thereafter. To the extent necessary, EPA may issue additional guidance for public comment on how the principles can be applied to specific product categories.
- b. Once final guidance for environmentally preferable products has been issued by EPA, Executive agencies shall use these principles, to the maximum extent practicable, in identifying and purchasing environmentally preferable products and shall modify their procurement programs by reviewing and revising specifications, solicitation procedures,

and policies as appropriate.

Sec. 504. Minimum Content Standard for Printing and Writing Paper. Executive agency heads shall ensure that agencies shall meet or exceed the following minimum materials content standards when purchasing or causing the purchase of printing and writing paper:

- a. For high speed copier paper, offset paper, forms bond, computer printout paper, carbonless paper, file folders, and white woven envelopes, the minimum content standard shall be no less than 20 percent postconsumer materials beginning December 31, 1994. This minimum content standard shall be increased to 30 percent beginning on December 31, 1998.
- b. For other uncoated printing and writing paper, such as writing and office paper, book paper, cotton fiber paper, and cover stock, the minimum content standard shall be 50 percent recovered materials, including 20 percent postconsumer materials beginning on December 31, 1994. This standard shall be increased to 30 percent beginning on December 31, 1998.
- c. As an alternative to meeting the standards in sections 504(a) and (b), for all printing and writing papers, the minimum content standard shall be no less than 50 percent recovered materials that are a waste material byproduct of a finished product other than a paper or textile product which would otherwise be disposed of in a landfill, as determined by the State in which the facility is located.
 1. The decision not to procure recycled content printing and writing paper meeting the standards specified in this section shall be based solely on a determination by the contracting officer that a satisfactory level of competition does not exist, that the items are not available within a reasonable time period, or that the available items fails to meet reasonable performance standards established by the agency or are only available at an unreasonable price.
 2. Each agency should implement waste prevention techniques, as specified in section 402(d) of this order, so that total annual expenditures for recycled content printing and writing paper do not exceed current annual budgets for paper products as measured by average annual expenditures, adjusted for inflation based on the Consumer Price Index or other suitable indices. In determining a target budget for printing and writing paper, agencies may take into account such factors as employee increases or decreases, new agency or statutory initiatives, and episodic or unique requirements (e.g., census).
 3. Effective immediately, all agencies making solicitations for the purchase of printing and writing paper shall seek bids for paper with postconsumer material or recovered waste material as described in section 504(c).

Sec. 505. Revision of Brightness Specifications and Standards. The General Services Administration and other Federal agencies are directed to identify, evaluate and revise or eliminate any standards or specifications unrelated to performance that present barriers to the purchase of paper or paper products made by production processes that minimize emissions of harmful byproducts. This evaluation shall include a review of unnecessary brightness and stock clause provisions, such as lignin content and chemical pulp requirements. The GSA shall complete the review and revision of such specifications within six months after the effective date of this order, and shall consult closely with the Joint Committee on Printing during such process. The GSA shall also compile any information or market studies that may be necessary to accomplish the objectives of this provision.

Sec. 508. Procurement of Re-refined Lubricating Oil and Retread Tires. Within 180 days after the effective date of this order, agencies shall implement the EPA procurement guidelines for re-refined lubricating oil and retread tires.

- a. Commodity managers shall finalize revisions to specifications for re-refined oil and retread tires, and develop and issue specifications for tire retreading services, as commodity managers shall take affirmative steps to procure these items in accordance with RCRA section 6002.
- b. Once these items become available, fleet managers shall take affirmative steps to procure these items in accordance with RCRA section 6002.

Sec. 507. Product Testing. The Secretary of Commerce, through the National Institute of Standards and Technology ("NIST"), shall establish a program for testing the performance of products containing recovered materials or deemed to be environmentally preferable. NIST shall work with EPA, GSA and other public and private sector organizations that conduct appropriate life cycle analyses to gather information that will assist agencies in making selections of products and services that are environmentally preferable.

- a. NIST shall publish appropriate reports describing testing programs, their results, and recommendations for testing methods and related specifications for use by Executive agencies and other interested parties.
- b. NIST shall coordinate with other Executive and State agencies to avoid duplication with existing testing programs.

Part 6: Agency Goals and Reporting Requirements

Sec. 601. Goals for Waste Reduction. Each agency shall establish a goal for solid waste prevention and a goal for recycling to be achieved by the year 1995. These goals shall be submitted to the Federal Environmental Executive within 180 days after the effective date of this order. Progress on attaining these goals shall be reported by the agencies to the Federal Environmental Executive for the annual report specified in section 301 of this order.

Sec. 602. Goal for Increasing the Procurement of Recycled and Other Environmentally Preferable Products. Agencies shall strive to increase the procurement of products that are environmentally preferable or that are made with recovered materials and set annual goals to maximize the number of recycled products purchased, relative to non-recycled alternatives.

Sec. 603. Review of Implementation. The President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency ("PCIE") will request that the Inspector General periodically review agencies' affirmative procurement programs and reporting procedures to ensure their compliance with this order.

Part 7: Applicability and Other Requirements

Sec. 701. Contractor Operated Facilities. Contracts that provide for contractor operation of a government-owned or leased facility, awarded after the effective date of this order, shall include provisions that obligate the contractor to comply with the requirements of this order within the scope of its operations. In addition, to the extent permitted by law and where economically feasible, existing contracts should be modified.

Sec. 702. Real Property Acquisition and Management. Within 90 days after the effective date of this order, and to the extent permitted by law and where economically feasible,

Executive agencies shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this order in the acquisition and management of federally owned and leased space. GSA and other Executive agencies shall also include environmental and recycling provisions in the acquisition of all leased space and in the construction of new federal buildings.

Sec. 703. Retention of Funds. Within 90 days after the effective date of this order, the Administrator of GSA shall develop a legislative proposal providing authority for Executive agencies to retain a share of the proceeds from the sale of materials recovered through recycling or waste prevention programs and specifying the eligibility requirements for the materials being recycled.

Sec. 704. Model Facility Programs. Each Executive department and major procuring agency shall establish model facility demonstration programs that include comprehensive waste prevention and recycling programs and emphasize the procurement of recycled and environmentally preferable products and services using an electronic data interchange (EDI) system.

Sec. 705. Recycling Programs. Each Executive agency that has not already done so shall initiate a program to promote cost effective waste prevention and recycling of reusable materials in all of its facilities. The recycling programs implemented pursuant to this section must be compatible with applicable State and local recycling requirements. Federal agencies shall also consider cooperative ventures with State and local governments to promote recycling and waste reduction in the community.

Part 8: Awareness

Sec. 801. Agency Awards Program. A government-wide award will be presented annually by the White House to the best, most innovative program implementing the objectives of this order to give greater visibility to these efforts so that they can be incorporated government-wide.

Sec. 802. Internal Agency Awards Programs. Each agency shall develop an internal agency-wide awards program, as appropriate, to reward its most innovative environmental programs. Winners of agency-wide awards will be eligible for the White House award program.

Part 9: Revocation, Limitation and Implementation

Sec. 901. Executive Order No. 12780, dated October 31, 1991, is hereby revoked.

Sec. 902. This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any other person.

Sec. 903. The policies expressed in this order, including the requirements and elements for effective agency affirmative procurement programs, shall be implemented and incorporated in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) within 180 days after the effective date of this order. The implementation language shall consist of providing specific direction and guidance on agency programs for preference, promotion, estimation, certification, reviewing and monitoring.

Sec. 904. This order shall be effective immediately.

[Signed] William J. Clinton

The White House
October 20, 1993

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